

Our European Correspondence

LETTERS FROM HARRIET MARTINEAU
August 14th 1861

To the Editor of The National Anti Slavery Standard

SIR: We begin to take comfort now as the month of August is not only that the losses of the

ing. At the time they were reported at first, but it is now known that they are candid with which the extent of the misadventure is not so much as was supposed. It is now admitted that the misadventure is creditable and hopeful. During our war, everybody seemed to think us gone silly to do our misadventure and mismanagement as we did; we do not regret it, and we are glad to see that we follow the same course. On the Danube and in Crimea, the Russian loss was reported, a hundred thousand, "one Cossack"; and nothing is ever known of the losses of the French, either in battle or in disease. We cannot culture the thought of the country burying away thousands of men, in an undrained swamp, and never letting their families know what has become of them; but Czar and Emperors, and their tools, do this in prudence, and fortitude, and many other things, which are much better, than the same things.

things. We like much better the more prudence
higher fortitude with which you have recognized y
actual position under this great reverse, and
once setting to work to repair it. All seem to be ag
that this event will protract the war. I do not see
it affects the main ground of expectation of a sh
war—the weakness of the South. If the resource
the South are as scanty as we have throughout bel
should not see why a victory, or several victori
should improve her chances, except as far as she

capture arms, stores, etc. If the North were likely to be scared, a victory or two might make all the difference; but, if the North remains brave and steady, the collapse of the Confederates is just as much to be expected as before—no less and no more. It may be somewhat longer conflict, from a further conviction of the North of the necessity of military training, and obtaining good officers before new levies are committed to their charge; but this is not a new necessity, only one that is newly perceived.

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to the people, and free, meantime, to accomplish their work in their own way. We see with satisfaction the steadiness of Congress in declining at present all discussion that can be dispensed with; and we are impelled to ask whether some appeal cannot be made to those of our lists and other citizens to abstain from dictation or meddling with matters in which they do not bear responsibility.

But for the recent "turns of fate" the interest in the struggle would have subsided here to a lower grade than ever before. The great interest of the case is always been the question whether the anomaly of a slave always would and could be sustained in the domain

republic without destroying the organization it has long infested. But now every effort is used by the countrymen to annihilate that source of infection. Every slave brings a bundle of letters assuring every body that the contention has nothing whatever to do with slavery; that, in any event, nothing will be done about slavery; and that the silence of the President's friends is a tacit approval of the policy of the administration. The national expression in the whole country is, "I tell you that your Abolitionists' friends are not misled by these assurances. There are many others who believe slavery to be virtually abolished; but more because we are henceforth to get cotton from other countries. But you must perceive that the eager desire that slavery will remain unaltered until your civil war has been ended, is a very natural part of its interest to Englishmen. In such circumstances, you may conceive the amusement caused by the imputation that we are hypocritical about slavery because we do not rush into partnership with the

We have a stronger expectation that slavery will be abolished by this war than that the Republic will

preserved by it. The wisest students of political philosophy and of history have the most confirmed doubts whether a democratic republic can resume its former condition after a civil war; and there are incidents in your case which aggravate the doubt very seriously. This is not the time for entering at length into the

but it can never be too early to consider the tendency of any new action, rendered necessary by the war, to preserve or weaken the essential principles of our polity. In this matter of providing money, for instance, it makes a great difference in the political position whether your loan is supplied at home or abroad. It will be a strong safeguard to the democratic character of your polity if the money is supplied by the greatest number of citizens in small amounts; whereas there will probably be inextricable mischief from loan being taken, to any considerable extent, in a few hands. It is not probable that it will be subscribed unless terms are offered higher than would be needed at home, and high enough to attract that cupidity which, in every country, snatches at an immediate gain, at whatever cost.

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threefold. international commerce will be checked and the position of the United States lowered in proportion; your nation is subjected to the calamity class-hardship, which will introduce among you

worst social grievances of the Old World; and the adoption of a Protectionist policy is an infidelity to republican principle which precludes all practical reliance on republican professions. You will have seen the city articles of the leading English newspapers on the continued toleration by Congress of the Morrill tariff affects the credit and the prospects of any loan the Federal government, in the view of business men. You and we shall agree that if in an age of free trade

